

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly add new claims 21 and 22 as shown in the following listing of claims, which replaces all previous versions and listings of claims in the application.

1.-4. (canceled)

5. (original) A method of manufacturing a recording medium for recording and reproducing information utilizing mutual interaction due to near field light generated by light incident to an optical head or light irradiated onto a recording medium, comprising the steps of: patterning a light-blocking layer on a transparent substrate; and forming a layer dispersed with a metal particulate at the transparent substrate.

6. (original) The recording medium manufacturing method according to claim 5, further including a step for removing the layer formed on the light-blocking layer.

7.-20. (canceled)

21. (new) A method according to claim 5; wherein the metal particulate comprises at least one metal selected from the group consisting of Ag, Au, Cr, Al and Cu.

22. (new) A method of manufacturing a recording medium for recording and reproducing information utilizing near field light generated by light incident to an optical head or light irradiated onto the recording medium, comprising the steps of: forming a light-blocking layer over a surface of a transparent substrate; and forming over the transparent substrate a layer containing a dispersed metal particulate so that the light-blocking layer surrounds the layer containing the dispersed metal particulate.